

Message Text

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ACTION IO-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 PA-02 PRS-01 USIA-15 SS-15 NSC-05

SP-02 DHA-02 NEA-10 H-02 /077 W

----- 070117

R 301845Z OCT 75

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3431

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

UNCLAS USUN 5474

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, SGEN, UR

SUBJECT: USUN RECEIVES PLEA FOR RELEASE OF DR. MIKHAIL SHTERN
FROM UKRAINIAN FORCED LABOR CAMP

USUN OFFICER RECEIVED FOR AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN A PLEA TO HAVE
DR. MIKHAIL SHTERN RELEASED FROM PRISON. THE PLEA WAS PRESENTED
BY THE PRISONER'S SON, VICTOR SHTERN. ATTACHED TO THE PLEA WERE
COPIES OF PRESS COVERAGE FROM TIME MAGAZINE, NEW YORK TIMES, AND
BERNARD LEVIN'S ARTICLE IN THE LONDON TIMES OF JULY 24, 1975.
THE PRESS ARTICLES ARE BEING POUCHED TO THE SOVIET DESK IN DEPT.
MISOFF EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH PLIGHT OF POLITICAL PRISONERS IN
SOVIET UNION AND PROMISED TO FORWARD TEXT OF APPEAL TO DEPT AND
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW. TEXT OF APPEAL FOLLOWS. QUOTE:

A PLEA TO SAVE DR. MIKHAIL SHTERN FROM CERTAIN DEATH

TO: UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
SOVIET UNION MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS
UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

I, VICTOR SHTERN, SON OF DR. MIKHAIL SHTERN, HAVE COME TO THE
UNITED NATIONS TO PLEAD FOR MY FATHER'S LIFE.
HE IS A PRISONER IN THE UKRAINE, HELD IN THE CORRECTIVE LABOR
INSTITUTION (ITK) OF INTENSE SECURITY; KHARKOV 30, UYZH 313/12.
HE WAS SENTENCED LAST NEW YEAR'S EVE BY A UKRAINIAN COURT
TO 8 YEARS AT HARD LABOR FOR ALLEGEDLY TAKING PAYMENTS FROM
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PATIENTS, WHICH IS A CRIME IN UKRAINE. BUT THE CHARGES AGAINST

HIM WERE ABSOLUTELY FALSE AND ONLY A PRETEXT. THE REAL REASON HE IS IN PRISON IS THE FACT THAT I AND MY BROTHER, AUGUST, DARED TO EMIGRATE FROM THE UKRAINE TO ISRAEL. OUR DEPARTURE SPELLED OUR FATHER'S DOOM. HE IS NEARLY 58 YEARS OLD. HE HAS TUBERCULOSIS, A STOMACH ULCER AND GALL STONES; AND HIS SENTENCE TO EIGHT YEARS AT HARD LABOR IS VIRTUALLY A DEATH SENTENCE. HE HAS SUFFERED ENOUGH AT THE HANDS OF THE UKRANIANS. I APPEAL TO THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES MISSIONS TO THE U.N. AND TO THE U.N. HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION TO HELP FREE HIM FROM PRISON AND TO PERMIT HIM TO EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL WITH MY MOTHER, WHO IS CRITICALLY ILL WITH A BRAIN TUMOR. I APPEAL IN THE NAME OF HUMANITY AND MERCY TO FREE THIS DYING MAN AND TO PERMIT HIM AND MY CRITICALLY ILL MOTHER EMIGRATE TOGETHER TO ISRAEL. I LEFT THE U.S.S.R. FOR ISRAEL LAST JULY. I JOINED MY BROTHER THERE WHO HAD EMIGRATED IN FEBRUARY. THIS WHOLE INHUMANE CASE STARTED IN SEPTEMBER 1973, WHEN OUR FAMILY RECEIVED AN INVITATION FROM THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT TO EMIGRATE. WE CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS WOULD BE NO EASY STEP. ALTHOUGH THE INVITATION IS A NECESSARY START IN ORDER TO GET AN EXIT VISA, NO ONE QUESTIONED ITS VALIDITY AT THE TIME. BUT AS SOON AS THE INVITATION REACHED THE UKRAINE, IT BECAME A SIGNAL FOR OFFICIALS THAT OUR FAMILY HAD DECIDED TO LEAVE. WE ALSO CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT THIS SIGNAL WOULD TURN US INTO A DIFFERENT CATEGORY OF PEOPLE--PEOPLE BEYOND THE LAW. WE FACED A DILEMMA: SHOULD THE FAMILY APPLY TO EMIGRATE AS A GROUP OR SHOULD WE APPLY INDIVIDUALLY? AT ANY RATE, WE DECIDED THAT IT WOULD BE BEST IF MY BROTHER WOULD APPLY FIRST. HE DID, IN NOVEMBER 1973. THAT WAS A FATAL MISTAKE. HAD MY FATHER APPLIED, HE PROBABLY WOULD BE HERE TODAY IN MY PLACE, AND I WOULD BE IN PRISON. I DON'T MEAN THAT EVERYONE THAT APPLIES FOR A VISA GETS ARRESTED. BUT THE APPLICATION TO EMIGRATE GIVES ONES ENEMIES--JEALOUS COLLEGAUES, PARTY MEMBERS, JEWS AND NON-JEWS, AND ANTI-SEMITES AN OPPORTUNITY TO PUT THE PRESSURE ON, IF THEY GET INSTRUCTIONS FROM ABOVE. I WILL NOT DWELL ON THE JUDICIAL ASPECTS OF THE CASE. HOWEVER, IF I WANTED TO I HAVE ALL THE NECESSARY DOCUMENTS TO PROVE THAT HIS TRIAL WAS A PERVERSION OF JUSTICE. AS FOR THE MEDICAL ASPECTS, THE CASE IS SHEER MOCKERY OF THE HIPPOCRATIC PRINCIPLE. AND MORALLY, IT IS A SACRILEGE. MY FATHER DID NOTHING MORE THAN PERFORM HIS EVERYDAY DUTIES AS A GOOD DOCTOR TENDING SINCERELY TO HIS PATIENTS, AND THIS UNCLASSIFIED

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WAS USED AGAINST HIM. TODAY, MY FATHER IS A SICK, DYING OLD MAN WORKING AS A FORCED LABORER IN A STEEL MILL. HIS CONDITIONS ARE CLOSE TO THE ONES DESCRIBED IN SOLZEHNITZYN'S "GULAG ARCHIPELAGO". HE CANNOT SURVIVE MUCH LONGER. AND MY AILING MOTHER IS ALLOWED TO SEE HIM TWICE A YEAR. I APPEAL TO YOU TO INTERVENE IMMEDIATELY. HELP MY PARENTS EMIGRATE TO ISRAEL. THEY HAVEN'T MUCH TIME LEFT. VICTOR SHTERN UNQUOTE

MOYNIHAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TEXT, DIPLOMATIC COMMUNICATIONS, POLITICAL PRISONERS, PRISONERS RELEASE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 OCT 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975USUNN05474
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750377-0930
From: USUN NEW YORK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t1975107/aaaaagob.tel
Line Count: 116
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: buchant0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 NOV 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 NOV 2003 by ThomasVJ>; APPROVED <12 JAN 2004 by buchant0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: USUN RECEIVES PLEA FOR RELEASE OF DR. MIKHAIL SHTERN FROM UKRAINIAN FORCED LABOR CAMP
TAGS: SHUM, SGEN, UR, US, (SHTERN, MIKHAIL)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006